

VZCZCXRO8508
OO RUEHCN RUEHGH RUEHVC
DE RUEHHK #0843 1271106
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 071106Z MAY 09
FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7566
INFO RUEHOO/CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA GA PRIORITY
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY IA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

UNCLAS HONG KONG 000843

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR TFFLU01M CA/OCS/EP, M/PRI, SES-O, AAIT, OESIHA,
MED, HHS FOR OGHA, CDC ATLANTA FOR CCID AND COUGH

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [AEMR](#) [AMGT](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [KFLO](#) [KFLU](#) [KPAO](#) [KSAF](#) [MG](#)
PINR, PREL, TBIO, HK, CH
SUBJECT: HONG KONG H1N1 UPDATE (5/7), QUARANTINE ORDEAL ENDS

REF: HONG KONG 816

1. On May 7, Hong Kong health authorities began the phased release of the approximately 350 individuals (240 of which are foreign nationals, including 10 AMCITS) placed in quarantine due to exposure to the H1N1-positive patient confirmed in Hong Kong on May 1 (Reftel). The first group of 35 individuals were released at 1400. This group consisted of individuals that sat in the same section of the aircraft as the H1N1-positive patient on his arrival flight from Shanghai on 30 April and the taxi driver who took the H1N1 patient to his hotel for check-in. The driver who took him from the hotel to the hospital was released at 2000 hrs. Most of the remaining individuals in quarantine, 283 guests and staff at the Metropark Hotel where the H1N1 patient checked in prior to going to the hospital, will be released at 2030 hrs on Friday, May 8. With these releases only three individuals will remain in quarantine: two recent arrivals unrelated to the contact case who meet the reporting criteria (flu-like symptoms and recent travel to an H1N1 confirmed area), who will remain in quarantine until H1N1 tests are complete, and the H1N1 patient, who remains hospitalized in stable condition.

2. None of the individuals placed in quarantine developed strong flu-like symptoms or tested positive for H1N1, including two traveling companions of the H1N1 patient. Post's ACS staff have been in regular contact with the ten AMCITS in quarantine and assisting throughout the ordeal. Consulate staff will be at the Metropark hotel for the quarantine release on May 8 to assist the AMCITS and ensure there are no unanticipated issues with their release and departure. Each person released from quarantine is being given a final medical check and a specially prepared letter indicating they have fulfilled the Hong Kong quarantine requirements, did not develop symptoms and are cleared for travel by the HKG Department of Health. Upon release from quarantine, those not immediately departing Hong Kong are being provided an optional two nights free lodging at a choice of local Hong Kong hotels or provided transportation to a mass transit station. Hong Kong authorities are still searching for five guests registered at the hotel who did not report for quarantine.

DONOVAN